

*NYRDEA ASPRALLIS: Kalm.*



## NYROCA AUSTRALIS, *Gould.*

### White-eyed Duck.

*Nyroca Australis*, Gould, MSS. Eyton, Mon. of Anat., p. 160.

*Er-roó-doo*, Aborigines of the lowland districts of Western Australia.

*Bud-bun-bun-loot*, Aborigines of Port Essington.

*White-winged Duck* of the Colonists.

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THIS bird is frequently seen on the rivers in Van Diemen's Land, where I am certain that it breeds, the eggs in my own collection having been taken on the banks of the Derwent; I also shot many individuals on the Upper Hunter in the autumn of 1839, and from what I could learn from persons resident there, it makes annual visits to such parts of New South Wales when the lagoons are filled with water and food consequently abundant. The flats between Aberdeen and Scone had hundreds of these birds on them in company with the Pink-eyed Teal and Shovellers. I have also a fine example killed by Commander Ince, R.N., near the settlement at Port Essington, where however it is very rare; it is also occasionally met with in Western Australia. In this bird we have another beautiful representative of a species common to Europe and India, the *Nyroca leucophthalmos*, both birds having white eyes and a similar style of plumage; the Australian species differs however from its near ally in having a lighter-coloured plumage, and less of the chestnut hue; it is also a much larger bird. Quiet reaches of rivers where the water runs slowly, bays and inlets of the sea and lagoons, are among its favourite places of resort. As may be supposed, it is a very excellent diver and gains much of its food beneath the surface of the water, readily descending to the bottom in search of mollusca, insects and aquatic plants.

The only outward difference between the sexes consists in the female being rather smaller than the male, and somewhat less bright in colour.

The male has the general plumage chestnut-brown; across the breast a broad band of brownish white; secondaries white at the base, forming a conspicuous mark across the wing, and tipped with bronzy brown; basal portion of the inner webs of the primaries and under tail-coverts white; bill black with a band of blue-grey near the tip; irides white; forepart of the tarsi lead-colour; hind part of the tarsi and the webs blackish brown.

The female is similar, but much paler in colour, and has the centre of the abdomen brownish white, blending into the chestnut in lieu of the broad band crossing the same part in the male.

The front bird in the accompanying Plate represents the bird nearly the size of life.